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**UTAH**  
LIFE ELEVATED



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### 1 LEARN TO SURF CALIFORNIA

Where better for young surf dudes to hone their board skills than California? La Jolla Surf Camp is held on one of San Diego's most family-friendly beaches known for its gentle waves. On a five-day camp, children (aged five to ten) learn about ocean safety, surf etiquette and technique. Continue the ocean theme with a visit to Birch Aquarium in La Jolla, with its interactive displays on the sea life of the Pacific coast. San Diego has plenty more for children from Legoland to SeaWorld.

**Best for** Water babies.

**Book now** Five-day La Jolla Surf Camp ([lajollasurfcamp.com/california](http://lajollasurfcamp.com/california)) costs £200. Four nights at the four-and-a-half-star Hyatt Regency Mission Bay Spa and Marina in San Diego, including

flights, from £2,305 for a family of four with British Airways\*\*.

[ba.com/sandiego](http://ba.com/sandiego)

**Way to go** BA flies to San Diego from London Heathrow from June. [ba.com](http://ba.com)

### 2 SLEEP OVER AT THE MUSEUM NEW YORK

Ever since the success of the film *Night at the Museum*, sleepovers at top tourist attractions have been all the rage in New York. The most popular is at the American Museum of Natural History where children (aged seven to 13) can explore the dinosaur exhibits after hours, take a flashlight fossil tour and camp out beneath a 94ft Blue Whale in an exhibit hall. Other unforgettable slumber parties include an Extreme Sleepover at Ripley's Believe it or Not Odditorium in Times Square and a Family

Overnight Safari in the Bronx Zoo.

**Best for** Budding scientists.

**Details** £82 per person ([amnh.org/kids/sleepovers](http://amnh.org/kids/sleepovers)).

**Way to go** BA flies daily to New York (JFK and Newark) from London Heathrow and City. BA offers four nights at The Westin New York at Times Square including flights and accommodation only from £2,294 for a family of four\*. [ba.com/newyork](http://ba.com/newyork)

### 3 JOIN A WAGON TRAIN ADVENTURE WYOMING

Wannabe cowboys and girls can live out their Wild West fantasies on a three-night Wagon Train Adventure on the outskirts of Yellowstone National Park. Accompanied by real cowboys, families ride in covered wagons or on horseback through the Teton Mountains and Targhee National

Forest. In camp, activities include walking, swimming, riding and rope-handling lessons. Evenings are spent around the campfire hearing tales of the Old West.

**Best for** Pioneering spirits.

**Details** Teton Covered Wagon Train and Horse Adventure, £567 for adults; £517 for children aged nine to 14; £485 for children aged four to eight; from June to August ([tetonwagontrain.com](http://tetonwagontrain.com)).

**Way to go** BA flies to Dallas from London Heathrow and on to Jackson as a codeshare with American Airlines. [ba.com](http://ba.com)

### 4 MEET MICKEY AT WALT DISNEY WORLD FLORIDA

The world's largest and most visited theme park celebrates its 40th anniversary this year, and the occasion will be marked in true Disney style – fireworks, parades >



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and general Mickey madness. Though Universal Studios stole Disney's thunder with the opening of its Wizarding World of Harry Potter theme park last summer, when it comes to the feel-good factor, the Magic Kingdom, with its iconic pink Cinderella Castle, Main Street parades and cast of Disney characters, is hard to beat.

**Best for** Theme-park aficionados.  
**Way to go** BA flies to Orlando from London Gatwick (ba.com). BA offers seven nights at the five-star Waldorf Astoria in Orlando, including flights, from £2,853 for a family of four\* (ba.com/orlando). A seven-day premium ticket, giving entry to all four Disney World theme parks plus water parks, costs £240 per adult, £213 per child (disneyworld.disney.go.com).

#### 5 SEE THE WILD PONIES OF ASSATEAGUE VIRGINIA/ MARYLAND

Herds of wild ponies have roamed the white-sand beaches of Assateague Island off the coast of Virginia and Maryland for more than 400 years. Some believe they were stranded when a Spanish galleon was shipwrecked, others that they are descended from colonial horses. Either way, to come upon a herd grazing in the salt marshes is unforgettable. The best way to see them is on a guided cruise or gentle kayaking trip (with 300 ponies here, there's a good chance of spotting them), and you might also catch a glimpse of dolphins, stingray and bald eagles.

**Best for** Pony-mad children.  
**Details** Assateague Explorer's

90-minute Pony Express Nature Cruise costs £27 per adult and £21 per child (assateagueisland.com).

**Way to go** BA flies to Baltimore from London Heathrow. ba.com

#### 6 SLEEP IN THE TREETOPS OREGON

Children love to climb trees but the Pacific Tree Climbing Institute takes the activity to new heights. In Williamette National Forest, where Douglas firs soar to over 250ft, intrepid visitors can spend a night in the treetops. Guides match climbers to a tree to suit their ability, fit them with a harness, and, at the top, talk about the forest wildlife. As the sun sets over the mountains, it's time to settle down for a sleepover in a 'treeboat', a specially designed canvas hammock high above the ground. Wake to the sound of the

dawn chorus and to breakfast being delivered to your branch.

**Best for** Active children.

**Details** Day climbs £128 per person, overnight £256 per person, pacifictreeclimbing.com.

**Way to go** BA flies to Dallas from London Heathrow and onward to Portland with a codeshare with American Airlines. ba.com

#### 7 CAMP ON A DESERT ISLAND MAINE

With soaring pink granite cliffs, quiet creeks and rocky isles, Acadia National Park is a paradise for young explorers. A kayak is the best way to explore the park's ocean-sculpted isles and get up close to the wildlife, including seals, porpoises and bald eagles. Coastal Kayaking Tours offers guided expeditions





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for families (minimum age eight), from two hours to three days. On overnight trips, your guide will lead you to an uninhabited island, where you can camp overnight.

**Best for** Young Robinson Crusoes.

**Details** Coastal Kayaking Tours ([acadiafun.com](http://acadiafun.com)) offers a three-day camping trip from £253 per person.

**Way to go** BA flies to New York from London Heathrow and onward to Bangor as a codeshare with US Air. [ba.com](http://ba.com)

#### 8 RIDE THE ROLLER COASTERS LAS VEGAS

Sin City might not seem that child-friendly, but youngsters love the bright lights and garish attractions of Las Vegas. Start at Circus Circus Hotel, where trapeze artists, acrobats and jugglers

perform daily. It's also home to the Adventuredome, America's largest indoor theme park, featuring white-knuckle roller coasters like the Canyon Blaster. Serious fans won't want to miss the Manhattan Express, which twists and dives around the New York-New York hotel at speeds of up to 67 miles per hour. More sedately, take a gondola ride at The Venetian hotel, and for a sweet treat, head for Ethel M Chocolate Factory Tour.

**Best for** Children with a low boredom threshold.

**Details** Visit [vegas.com/attractions/kids.html](http://vegas.com/attractions/kids.html). Day passes to the Adventuredome: £17 for adults, £10 for children ([circuscircus.com](http://circuscircus.com)).

**Way to go** BA flies to Las Vegas from London Heathrow. [ba.com](http://ba.com)

#### 9 DUNE SURF COLORADO

At weekends, Colorado's Great Sand Dunes National Park is liberally sprinkled with people rolling, surfing, skiing and sledding down the powder-soft slopes of North America's tallest sand dunes. With 30 square miles of dunes, some up to 750ft in height, finding one to yourself isn't a problem. In spring and early summer, cool off in the Medano Creek, a shallow current formed by snow melt from the Sangre de Cristo mountains, which creates a seaside beach for building sandcastles. There's even a day to learn sand sculpting.

**Best for** Older children with energy to burn.

**Details** [nps.gov/grsa](http://nps.gov/grsa).

**Way to go** BA flies to Denver from London Heathrow. [ba.com](http://ba.com)

#### 10 BE AN ASTRONAUT FOR THE DAY TEXAS

For any child who dreams of flying to the moon, the Space Center Houston runs a programme of day camps. From preparing astronaut meals to trying on space suits and programming robots, activities are designed to demystify space exploration: an Imax film, interactive play area and a tram tour of Nasa's Johnson Space Center.

**Best for** Aspiring astronauts.

**Details** £35 per day, [spacecenter.org](http://spacecenter.org).

**Way to go** BA flies to Houston from London Heathrow. [ba.com](http://ba.com)

#### 11 RAFT THE CANYONS UTAH

Combine adventure with great scenery on a rafting adventure through southern Utah. Glide past cliffs, canyons and desert plateaux

on a four-day family excursion on the Green River. Children will love riding the rapids (only moderately hair-raising) and exploring outlaw hideouts, ancient dinosaur habitats and camping under the stars.

**Best for** Lovers of the outdoors.

**Details** A four-day Green River Rafting trip costs from £820 for adults, £540 for children; minimum age five ([westernriver.com](http://westernriver.com)).

**Way to go** BA flies to Dallas and on to Salt Lake City with a codeshare with American Airlines. [ba.com](http://ba.com)

#### 12 GO ON SAFARI FLORIDA

Jump continents and take an African safari at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay. Spot free-roaming giraffe, antelope and zebra, watch live shows or jump on thrilling rides (try the dive coaster that drops into an underwater tunnel). New for spring is the Cheetah Hunt – a high-speed roller coaster that mimics the movement of a galloping cheetah chasing its prey.

**Best for** Wildlife loving children.

**Details** A 14-day two-park SeaWorld and Busch Gardens ticket is £67 for an adult, £61 for a child.

**Way to go** BA flies to Tampa from London Gatwick from March. BA offers seven nights at the four-star Hyatt Regency Tampa, including flights, from £2,410 for a family of four\*. [ba.com/tampa](http://ba.com/tampa)

#### SEE YOU ONLINE

For the top 10 places that'll keep youngsters amused in London and the UK, visit [bahighlife.com](http://bahighlife.com).



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